REMARKS

No claims have been amended. No claims have been added.

Claims 1-21 remain pending. Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b). They were specifically rejected as being anticipated by both Fukui (5,293,076) and Wind et al. (5,988,881).

Fukui discloses a controller for an engine to avoid a battery from becoming excessively discharged. The controller of Fukui senses a battery voltage and adjusts the current to an actuator in response to a low battery voltage condition. In some of the embodiments, the current to the actuator is reduced in order to reduce the load on the battery. In other embodiments, the current to an actuator is increased in order to increase engine speed thereby increasing the output from a generator. In all embodiments, the controller operates in response to a sensed battery voltage condition.

Wind et al. disclose an apparatus and method to enable the engine idle speed to be set to the minimum necessary without discharging the battery. Wind et al. achieve this by monitoring the alternator field modulation. The idle RPM is then controlled based on the condition of the alternator field modulation.

As will be discussed in greater detail below with respect to the claims, neither Fukui nor Wind et al. teach or suggest controlling the idle speed of an engine based on instantaneous current or power requirements of the engine or vehicle.

The method of claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, the steps of "determining instantaneous current requirement of electronics of a watercraft; from the instantaneous current requirements, determining a minimum engine speed..." and "adjusting, on-the-fly, idle speed of the fuel injected engine to the minimum engine speed".

Fukui does not teach or suggest determining instantaneous current requirements of electronics, and much less controlling an engine speed based on that determination. As discussed above, in the embodiments of Fukui where engine speed is being controlled, it is being done based on voltage level of the battery, not instantaneous current requirements as claimed by the Applicant.

Wind et al. also does not teach or suggest determining instantaneous current requirements of electronics and controlling an engine speed based on that determination. As discussed above, idle engine speed control in Wind et al. is based on alternator field modulation, not instantaneous current requirements as claimed by the Applicant.

Since neither Fukui nor Wind et al. teach or suggest controlling an engine speed based on instantaneous current requirements, combining these two references would also not result in the claimed invention. Therefore, in view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 should be allowable.

Dependent claims 2-7 recite additional features of the invention and are therefore believed to be allowable for the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1 and for the additional features recited therein.

Claim 8 recites an outboard motor having, *inter alia*, "an ECU to instruct the idle speed controller to set an idle speed of the engine based on instantaneous power requirements on the battery". Neither Fukui nor Wind et al., alone or combined, teach or suggest controlling idle engine speed based on instantaneous power requirements on the battery. As discussed above, they teach controlling engine speed based on battery voltage level and alternator field modulation respectively. Therefore, in view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claim 8 should be allowable.

Dependent claims 9-15 recite additional features of the invention and are therefore believed to be allowable for the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 8 and for the additional features recited therein.

Claim 16 recites a computer readable storage medium having a computer program which causes a processor to, *inter alia*, "based on the instantaneous battery voltage level and the instantaneous power requirements, determine an engine idle speed". Although Fukui teaches adjusting (but not determining) engine speed based on battery voltage, it does not teach or suggest doing so with the additional consideration of instantaneous power requirements as claimed by the Applicant. Wind et al. also does not teach or suggest determining an engine idle speed based on instantaneous power requirements. Therefore, in view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claim 16 should be allowable.

Dependent claims 17-21 recite additional features of the invention and are therefore believed to be allowable for the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 16 and for the additional features recited therein.

In view of the above remarks, the Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-21 are allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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